Toki Pona

Toki Pona (rendered as *toki pona*[a] and often translated as 'the language of good';[b] IPA: [ˈtoki ˈpona] (); English: /ˈtoʊki ˈpoʊnə/) is a philosophical artistic constructed language known for its small vocabulary, simplicity, and ease of acquisition.[5] It was created by **Sonja Lang** (*née* Elen Kisa), a Canadian linguist and translator,[5][6] to simplify her thoughts and communication. The first drafts were published online in 2001,[2] while the complete form was published in the 2014 book *Toki Pona: The Language of Good*.[7][8] Lang also released a supplementary dictionary, the *Toki Pona Dictionary*, in July 2021, describing the language as used by its community of speakers. In January of 2024, a third book was released, titled "su" which is a Toki Pona adaptation of the Wizard of Oz story, written in Sitelen Pona. These three books are named pu, ku, and su respectively in Toki Pona.

Toki Pona is an isolating language with only 14 phonemes and an underlying feature of minimalism. It focuses on simple, near-universal concepts to maximize expression from very few words. In *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* (referred to as *pu*), Lang presents around 120 words, while the later *Toki Pona Dictionary* (referred to as *ku*) lists 137 "essential" words and a number of less-used ones.[c] Its words are easy to pronounce across language backgrounds, which allows it to serve as a bridge of sorts for people of different cultures.[12] However, it was not created as an international auxiliary language. Partly inspired by Taoist philosophy, the language is designed to help users concentrate on basic things and to promote positive thinking, in accordance with the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis. Despite the small vocabulary, speakers can understand and communicate, mainly relying on context, combinations of words, and expository sentences to express more specific meanings.

After its initial creation, a small community of speakers developed in the early 2000s.[6][13] While activity mainly takes place online in chat rooms, on social media, and in other online groups, there have been a few organized in-person meetings.[2]

Etymology

The name of the language has two parts – *toki* ('language'),[14] derived from Tok Pisin *tok*, which itself comes from English *talk*; and *pona* ('good/simple'), from Esperanto *bona*,[14] from Latin *bonus*. The name *toki pona* therefore means both 'good language' and 'simple language', emphasizing that the language encourages speakers to find joy in simplicity.

Purpose

One of the language's main goals is a focus on minimalism. It is designed to express maximal meaning with minimal complexity.[3] Like a pidgin, it focuses on simple concepts and elements that are near-universal among cultures. It has a minimal vocabulary and 14 phonemes devised to be easy to pronounce for speakers of various language backgrounds.[5][2][6]

Partly inspired by Taoist philosophy, another goal of Toki Pona is to help its speakers focus on the essentials by reducing complex concepts to basic elements.[5][15] From these simple notions, more complex ideas can be built up by simple combining.[3] This allows the users to see the fundamental nature and effect of the ideas expressed.

On the basis of the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, which states that a language influences the way its speakers think and behave,[6][15] Toki Pona was designed to induce positive thinking.[16]

Another aim of the language is for the speakers to become aware of the present moment and pay more attention to the surroundings and the words people use.[5] According to its author, it is meant to be "fun and cute".[17]

Although it was not intended as an international auxiliary language,[16] a worldwide online community uses it for communication.[5]

Toki Pona	
toki pona	
The Toki Pona logo, presenting the words *toki pona* written in *sitelen pona*	
Pronunciation	[ˈtoki ˈpona]
Created by	Sonja Lang
Date	2001
Setting and usage	Testing principles of minimalism, the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis and pidgins
Users	500 ~ 5000 (2021)[1]
Purpose	Constructed language, combining elements of the subgenres personal language and philosophical language
Writing system	Latin script *sitelen pona* (logographic) *sitelen sitelen* (logographic with an alphasyllabary for foreign words); and numerous other community-made scripts
Signed forms	*luka pona, toki pona luka*
Sources	A posteriori language, with

History

Toki Pona was developed by the Canadian linguist and translator Sonja Lang (formerly Sonja Elen Kisa). Born in 1978 in Moncton, New Brunswick,[18] Lang grew up in a bilingual family; her mother spoke French, and her father spoke English. During and after her high school years, she became fluent in five languages, including Esperanto.[19] She later said that Esperanto was the inspiration for her creation of constructed languages.[20]

	elements of English, Tok Pisin, Finnish, Georgian, Dutch, Acadian French, Esperanto, Serbo-Croatian and Chinese
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	tok
Glottolog	toki1239 (http s://glottolog.or g/resource/languo id/id/toki1239)
IETF	tok

In 2001, Lang was experiencing depression and started working on Toki Pona as a way to simplify her thoughts.[21][19] In the same year, an early version of the language was published online, and it quickly gained popularity.[6] Early activity took place in an unknown Yahoo! group. Members of the group discussed the language with one another in English, Toki Pona, and Esperanto, proposed changes, and talked about the resources on the *tokipona.org* site. At its peak member count, the group had a little over 500 members. Messages in the group were archived in the Toki Pona forum using phpBB.

In 2014, Lang released her first book on the language, *Toki Pona: The Language of Good*, which features 120 main words, plus 3 words presented as synonyms of these, and provides a completed form of the language based on how Lang used the language at the time.[7] In 2016, the book was also published in French.[22]

In 2015, YouTuber jan Misali uploaded a series titled *12 Days of sona pi toki pona*, which proved influential and was recommended as a learning tool by *sitelen sitelen* creator Jonathan Gabel.[23][24]

In 2021, Lang released her second book, *Toki Pona Dictionary*, a comprehensive two-way Toki Pona–English dictionary including more than 11,000 entries detailing the use of the language as she gathered from polls conducted in the *ma pona pi toki pona* Discord server over a few months. The book presents the original 120 words plus 16 *nimi ku suli* (major dictionary words) as gathered from at least over 40% of respondents. It also contains 45 words given by 40% or less of respondents, referred to as *nimi ku pi suli ala* (minor dictionary words), sometimes also called *nimi ku lili*.[25] As of 2021, this is the second published print book about Toki Pona that can be ordered over the internet, the first being Lang's 2014 work, *Toki Pona: The Language of Good*.[26]

After two failed applications for an ISO 639-3 code, a third request was filed in August 2021, which resulted in the ISO 639-3 code "tok" being adopted in January 2022.[27]

Toki Pona was the subject of some scientific works,[2] and it has also been used for artificial intelligence and software tools,[22] as well as a therapeutic method for eliminating negative thinking by having patients keep track of their thoughts in the language.[6] In 2010 it was chosen for the first version of the vocabulary for the ROILA project. The purpose of the study was to investigate the use of an artificial language on the accuracy of machine speech recognition, and it was revealed that the modified vocabulary of Toki Pona significantly outperformed English.[28]

In 2024, Lang released the book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (Toki Pona edition)*, the first in a series of illustrated *sitelen pona* storybooks called *su*, illustrated by Evan Dahm.[29] This book series establishes content for using the language as opposed to learning it.[30]

Phonology and phonotactics

Phonemic inventory

Toki Pona has nine consonants (/p, t, k, s, m, n, l, j, w/) and five vowels (/a, e, i, o, u/),[2][6] shown here with the International Phonetic Alphabet symbols. Stress falls on the initial syllable of a word, and it is marked by an increase in loudness, length, or pitch.[31] There are no diphthongs, vowel hiatus, contrasting vowel length, consonant clusters (except those starting with the nasal coda), or tones.[2] Both its sound inventory and phonotactics are compatible with the majority of human languages, and are therefore readily accessible.[7]

Consonants

	Labial	Coronal	Dorsal
Nasal	m	n	
Stop	p	t	k
Fricative		s	
Approximant	w	l	j

Vowels

	Front	Back
Close	i	u
Mid	e	o
Open	a	

More narrow model pronunciations for the vowels /a, e, i, o, u/ are [ä, ẹ, i, ọ, u],[32] but /a/ can vary from [a] to [ɑ], /e/ can vary from [e] to [ɛ], and /o/ can vary from [o] to [ɔ].

Distribution

The statistical vowel spread is fairly typical when compared with other languages.[2] Counting each root once, 32% of vowels are /a/, 25% are /i/, with /e/ and /o/ a bit over 15% each, and 10% are /u/.[2] The usage frequency in a 10kB sample of texts was slightly more skewed: 34% /a/, 30% /i/, 15% each /e/ and /o/, and 6% /u/.[33]

Of the syllable-initial consonants, /l/ is the most common, at 20% total; /k, s, p/ are over 10%, then the nasals /m, n/ (not counting final n), with the least common, at little more than 5% each, being /t, w, j/. The high frequency of /l/ and low frequency of /t/ is somewhat unusual among the world's languages.[2]

Phonotactics

The first syllable of a word follows the form (C)V(N), i.e. an optional consonant, a vowel, and an optional final nasal. Subsequent syllables follow the same form, except that the leading consonant is required. Syllables can thus be CV, CVN, V, or VN.[22] As in most languages, CV is the most common syllable type, at 75% (counting each root once). V and CVN syllables are each around 10%, while only 5 words have VN syllables (for 2% of syllables).[2]

Most words (70%) are disyllabic; about 20% are monosyllables and 10% trisyllables. This is a common distribution, and similar to Polynesian.[2]

The following sequences are not allowed: */wu, wo, ji, ti/, nor may a syllable's final nasal occur before /m/ or /n/ in the same root.[2][22]

Proper nouns are usually converted into Toki Pona proper adjectives using a set of guidelines. The native, or even colloquial, pronunciation is used as the basis for the subsequent sound conversion. Thus, England or English become *Inli* and John becomes *San*.[34]

All valid syllables in Toki Pona

	-a	-an	-e	-en	-i	-in	-o	-on	-u	-un
∅-	a	an	e	en	i	in	o	on	u	un
p-	pa	pan	pe	pen	pi	pin	po	pon	pu	pun
t-	ta	tan	te	ten			to	ton	tu	tun
k-	ka	kan	ke	ken	ki	kin	ko	kon	ku	kun
m-	ma	man	me	men	mi	min	mo	mon	mu	mun
n-	na	nan	ne	nen	ni	nin	no	non	nu	nun
s-	sa	san	se	sen	si	sin	so	son	su	sun
l-	la	lan	le	len	li	lin	lo	lon	lu	lun
w-	wa	wan	we	wen	wi	win				
j-	ja	jan	je	jen			jo	jon	ju	jun

Allophony

The nasal at the end of a syllable can be pronounced as any nasal stop, though it is normally assimilated to the following consonant. That is, it typically occurs as an [n] before /t/, /s/ or /l/, as an [m] before /p/ or /w/, as an [ŋ] before /k/, and as an [ɲ] before /j/.[2]

Because of its small phoneme inventory, Toki Pona allows for extensive allophonic variation. For example, /p t k/ may be pronounced [b d g] as well as [p t k], /s/ as [z] or [ʃ] as well as [s], /l/ as [ɾ] as well as [l], and vowels may be either long or short.[2]

Writing systems

Latin alphabet chart for Toki Pona

Fourteen Latin letters, *a e i j k l m n o p s t u w*, are used to write the language. They have the same values as in the International Phonetic Alphabet:[2] *j* sounds like English *y* (as in many Germanic and Slavic languages) and the vowels are like those of Spanish, Modern Greek, or Modern Hebrew. Capital initials are used to mark proper nouns, while Toki Pona roots are always

written with lowercase letters, even when they start a sentence.[2][3] Besides the Latin alphabet, which is the most common way of writing the language, many alternative writing systems have been developed for and adapted to Toki Pona.[2] Most successful and widespread are two logographic writing systems, *sitelen pona* and *sitelen sitelen*. Both were included in the book *Toki Pona: The Language of Good.*

Sitelen Pona

sitelen pona hieroglyphs from *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* by Sonja Lang

Modified symbols in *sitelen pona*

The Sitelen Pona (lit. ''good/simple writing/drawing'') writing system was devised as an alternative writing system by Lang herself, and first published in her book *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* in 2014.[8] In it each word is represented by its own symbol. It has been described as "a hieroglyphic-like script that makes use of squiggles and other childlike shapes".[35]

Symbols representing a single adjective may be written inside or above the symbol for the preceding word that they modify. The symbol of the language ☺ is written in *sitelen pona*,[35] with the symbol ⌣ (*pona*) written inside the symbol ○ (*toki*).

sitelen sitelen

The word symbols and punctuation of
sitelen sitelen

The *sitelen sitelen* ('drawn writing') writing system, also known as *sitelen suwi* ('cute writing'),[36] was created by Jonathan Gabel. This more elaborate non-linear system uses two separate methods to form words: logograms representing words and an alphasyllabary for writing the syllables (especially for proper names). The complex artful designs of the glyphs are chosen to help people who use this writing system to slow down and explore how not only the language but also the method of communication can influence their thinking.[8][36]

sitelen sitelen's overall aesthetics are inspired by US west-coast comix artists such as Jim Woodring and US east-coast graffiti artists such as Kenny Scharf.

For both writing systems, the designs of many individual characters are inspired by characters and principles from various other writing systems, including Egyptian hieroglyphs, Linear B, Chinese characters, Maya script, Mi'kmaw hieroglyphic writing, Dongba symbols, as well as early Pagan and Christian signs and symbols.[37]

Grammar

Toki Pona's [word order](#) is [subject–verb–object](#).[15][38] The word *li* introduces [predicates](#), *e* introduces [direct objects](#).

SUBJECT + "LI" + VERB + "E" + OBJECT

A noun is followed by its adjectives. Likewise, a verb is followed by its modifiers.

The position of a word in a sentence tells you its role. This allows Toki Pona's limited number of words to serve many purposes. Thus, the word *moku* when in the verb position means "to eat". But in the noun position, it means "food". As an adjective, it might mean "edible".

Toki Pona has more complicated sentence structures too. [Prepositional phrases](#) follow the [objects](#), and *la* ends a phrase or [clause](#) that comes before the [subject](#) to add additional context.[22]

Some [roots](#) are [grammatical particles](#), while others are [content words](#) with [lexical](#) meanings. The content words do not fall into well defined [parts of speech](#); rather, they may be used generally as nouns, verbs, [modifiers](#), or [interjections](#) depending on context or their position in a phrase.[2][15]

Sentence structures

A sentence may be an interjection, statement, wish/command, or question.

For example, interjections such as *a*, *ala*, *ike*, *jaki*, *mu*, *pakala*, *pona*, *toki*, etc. can stand alone as a sentence.[15]

Statements follow the normal structure of *subject-predicate* with an optional *la* phrase at the beginning. The word *li* always precedes the predicate unless the subject is *mi* or *sina*, in which case it always doesn't.[22] The direct object marker *e* comes before direct objects. More *li* and *e* markers can present new predicates or direct objects. [Vocative](#) phrases come before the main sentence and are marked with *o* at the end of the phrase, after the addressee.[15][22]

In commands, the word *o* comes before a verb to express a second person command. It can also replace *li*, or come after the subjects *mi* or *sina*, to express wishes.

There are two ways to form [yes–no questions](#) in Toki Pona. The first method is to use the "verb *ala* verb" construction in which *ala* comes in between a duplicated verb, auxiliary verb, or other [predicators](#).[15] Another way to form a yes–no question is to put *anu seme?* (lit. 'or what?') after

the phrase being inquired about. Questions cannot be made by just putting a question mark at the end of a sentence.

Non-polar questions are formed by replacing the unknown information with the interrogative word *seme*.[22]

Pronouns

Toki Pona has four basic pronouns: *mi* (first person), *sina* (second person), *ona* (third person), and *ni* (demonstrative). Number and gender are not specified by default, but they can be specified with additional modifiers to the pronouns. [39]

Nouns

With such a small root-word vocabulary, Toki Pona relies heavily on noun phrases, where a noun is modified by a following root, to make more complex meanings.[40] A typical example is combining *jan* ('person') with *utala* ('to fight') to make *jan utala* ('fighter, soldier, warrior'). ()

Nouns do not decline according to number. *jan* can mean 'person', 'people', 'humanity', or 'somebody', depending on context.[2]

Toki Pona does not use isolated proper nouns; instead, they must modify a preceding noun. For this reason, they may be called "proper adjectives" or simply "proper words" instead of "proper nouns". For example, names of people and places are used as modifiers of the common roots for "person" and "place", e.g. *ma Kanata* (lit. 'Canada land') or *jan Lisa* (lit. 'Lisa person').[2]

Modifiers

Phrases in Toki Pona are head-initial; modifiers always come after the word that they modify.[15] Therefore, *soweli utala*, lit. 'animal of fighting', can be a 'fighting animal', whereas *utala soweli*, lit. 'fighting of animal', can mean 'animal war'.[2]

When a second modifier is added to a phrase, for example *jan pona lukin*, it modifies all that comes before it, so *jan pona mute* might mean 'many good people', with both *pona* 'good' and *mute* 'many' modifying *jan* 'person'.[2] The particle *pi* is placed before two or more modifiers to group them into another phrase that functions as a unit to modify the head: In *jan pi pona mute*, *pona mute* as a unit means 'much goodness', to together mean 'very good person'. *mute* modifies *pona*, and *pona mute* as a whole modifies *jan*.[2][22]

Demonstratives, numerals, and possessive pronouns come after the head like other modifiers.[2]

Verbs

Toki Pona does not inflect verbs according to person, tense, mood, or voice, as the language features no inflection whatsoever. Person is indicated by the subject of the verb; time is indicated through context or by a temporal adverb in the sentence.[2]

Prepositions are used in the predicate in place of a regular verb.[8][38]

Vocabulary

Toki Pona has around 120 to 137 words.[c] Each is polysemous and covers a range of similar concepts,[41] so *suli* not only means 'big' or 'long', but also 'important'.[2] Their use relies heavily on context. To express more complex thoughts, the roots can be combined. For example, *jan pona* can mean 'friend', although it translates to lit. 'good/friendly person',[40] and *telo nasa*, lit. 'strange liquid', could be understood to mean 'alcohol' or 'alcoholic beverage' depending on the context. The verb *to teach* can be expressed by *pana e sona*, lit. 'give knowledge'.[2] Essentially identical concepts can be described by different words as the choice relies on the speaker's perception and experience.[7]

Colors

Many colors can be expressed by using subtractive colors.

Toki Pona has five words for colors: *pimeja* (black), *walo* (white), *loje* (red), *jelo* (yellow), and *laso* (blue and green). Although the simplified conceptualization of colors tends to exclude a number of colors that are commonly expressed in Western languages, speakers sometimes may combine these five words to make more specific descriptions of certain colors. For instance, "purple" may be represented by combining *laso* and *loje*. The phrase *laso loje* means "a reddish shade of blue" and *loje laso* means "a bluish shade of red".[2]

Numbers

Toki Pona has words for one (*wan*), two (*tu*), and many (*mute*). In addition, *ala* can mean 'zero', although its meaning is l̲i̲t̲. 'no' or 'none', and *ale* 'all' can express an infinite or immense amount.

The simplest number system uses these five roots to express any amount necessary. For numbers larger than two, speakers would use *mute* which means 'many'.[41]

A more complex system expresses larger numbers additively by using phrases such as *tu wan* for three, *tu tu* for four, and so on. This feature purposely makes it impractical to communicate large numbers.[41][42] This system, described in Lang's book, also uses *luka* (l̲i̲t̲. 'hand') to signify 'five', *mute* (l̲i̲t̲. 'many') to signify 'twenty' and *ale* (l̲i̲t̲. 'all') to signify 'hundred'. For example, using this structure *ale tu* would mean '102' and *mute mute mute luka luka luka tu wan* would signify '78'.[43]

Roots history

Body parts in Toki Pona. The words *oko*, *uta*, *lawa*, *luka* and *noka* have Slavic, particularly Serbo-Croatian roots: *oko, usta, glava, ruka, noga*.

Some words have obsolete synonyms. For example, *nena* replaced *kapa* (protuberance) early in the language's development for unknown reasons.[44] Later, the pronoun *ona* replaced *iki* ('he, she, it, they'), which was sometimes confused with *ike* ('bad').[42]

Similarly, *ali* was added as an alternative to *ale* ('all') to avoid confusion with *ala* ('no, not') among people who reduce unstressed vowels, though both forms are still used.

Originally, *oko* meant 'eye' and *lukin* was used as a verb 'see'. In the book, the meanings were later merged into *lukin*, *oko* being the alternative.[8][22]

Words that were simply removed from the lexicon include *leko* ('block, stairs'), *monsuta* ('monster, fear'), *majuna* ('old'), *kipisi* ('to cut'), and *pata* ('sibling').[44] These words were considered outdated because they were not included in the official book.[44] However, *oko*, *leko*, *monsuta*, and *kipisi* retained enough usage in the community that they were re-included in the lexicon as *nimi ku suli* in *Toki Pona Dictionary*.[45]

Besides *nena* and *ona*, which replaced existing roots, a few roots were added to the original 118: *pan* ('grain, bread, pasta, rice'), *esun* ('market, shop, trade'), *alasa* ('hunt, gather'), and *namako* ('extra, additional, spice'), another word for *sin* ('new, fresh').[9]

Provenance
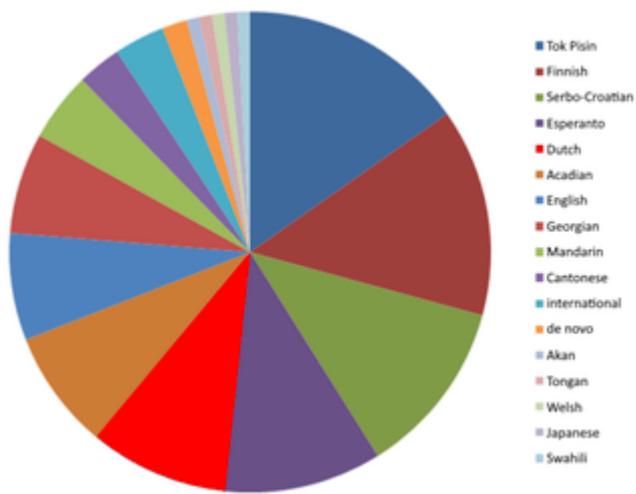
Origin of the Toki Pona roots by language. Obsolete roots are not included.

Most Toki Pona roots come from English, Tok Pisin, Finnish, Georgian, Dutch, Acadian French, Esperanto, and Serbo-Croatian, with a few from Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese).[14][3]

Many of these derivations are transparent. For example, *toki* ('speech, language') is similar to Tok Pisin *tok* and its English source *talk*, while *pona* ('good, positive'), from Esperanto *bona*, reflects generic Romance *bon, buona*, English *bonus*, etc. However, the changes in pronunciation required by the simple phonetic system often make the origins of other words more difficult to see. The word *lape* ('to sleep, to rest'), for example, comes from Dutch *slapen* and is cognate with English *sleep*; *kepeken* ('to use') is somewhat distorted from Dutch *gebruiken*, and *akesi* from *hagedis* ('lizard') is scarcely recognizable. [Because *ti* is an illegal syllable in Toki Pona, Dutch *di* becomes *si*.][14]

Although only 14 roots (12%) are listed as derived from English, a large number of the Tok Pisin, Esperanto, and other roots are transparently cognate with English, raising the English-friendly portion of the vocabulary to about 30%. The portions of the lexicon from other languages are 15% Tok Pisin, 14% Finnish, 14% Esperanto, 12% Serbo-Croatian, 10% Acadian French, 9% Dutch,

8% Georgian, 5% Mandarin, 3% Cantonese; one root each from Welsh, Tongan (an English borrowing), Akan, and an uncertain language (apparently Swahili); four phonesthetic roots (two which are found in English, one from Japanese, and one which was made up); and one other made-up root (the grammatical particle *e*).[14]

Signed Toki Pona and Luka Pona

Hand shapes of Signed Toki Pona and Luka Pona

Signed Toki Pona, or *toki pona luka*, is a manually coded form of Toki Pona. Each word and letter has its own sign, which is distinguished by the hand shape, location of the hand on the body, palm or finger orientation, and the usage of one or both hands. Most signs are performed with the right hand at the required location. A few signs, however, are performed with both hands in a symmetrical way. To form a sentence, each of the signs is performed using the grammar and word order of Toki Pona.[8]

A more naturalistic constructed sign language called *luka pona* also exists, and is more widely used in the Toki Pona community than *toki pona luka*. It is a separate language with its own grammar, but has a vocabulary that generally parallels Toki Pona. *luka pona*'s signs have increased iconicity as compared to *toki pona luka*, and many signs are loan-words from natural sign languages. Its grammar is subject-object-verb, and, like natural sign languages, it makes use of classifier constructions and signing space.[46][47] In *Toki Pona Dictionary*, Sonja Lang recommends learning *luka pona* instead of *toki pona luka*.[48]

Community

The language is fairly well known among Esperantists, who often offer courses and conversation groups at their meetings.[2] In 2007, Lang reportedly said that at least 100 people speak Toki Pona fluently and estimated that a few hundred have a basic knowledge of the language.[6][49] One-hour courses of Toki Pona were taught on various occasions by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during their Independent Activities Period.[6]

The language is used mainly online on social media, in forums, and other online groups.[49] Users of the language are spread out across multiple platforms. A Yahoo! group existed from about 2002 to 2009, when it moved to a forum on a phpBB site.[50][51] For a short time there was a Wikipedia written in Toki Pona (called *lipu Wikipesija*). It was closed in 2005[52] and moved to Wikia/Fandom, and then moved from Fandom to an independent website on 23 April 2021.[53]

The largest groups exist on Facebook, Discord, and Reddit. Two large groups exist on Facebook— one designated for conversation in Toki Pona and English, and the other for conversation in only Toki Pona.[54] The former of the two is the more popular. As of June 2024, the most joined Facebook group has over 7k members,[55] the largest Discord group has over 14k members,[56] and the largest community on Reddit has over 21k members.[57]

In November 2021, the language was added as an interface language for the video game Minecraft.[58] Toki Pona is also an available language on fanfiction site Archive of Our Own.[59]

Memrise has user-created materials for learning Toki Pona.[60]

Literature
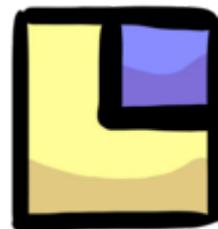
Logo of the first registered zine in Toki Pona

There are few published books and many other works in Toki Pona. Most of the published works are language-learning books for beginners like *akesi seli lili* and *meli olin moli*.[61] Many other works are translations of original literature in other languages. Starting in 2020, a group has been working on and publishing a zine in Toki Pona called *lipu tenpo* (lit. 'book of time'), and it is officially registered as a zine in the United Kingdom.[62][63]

Sample texts
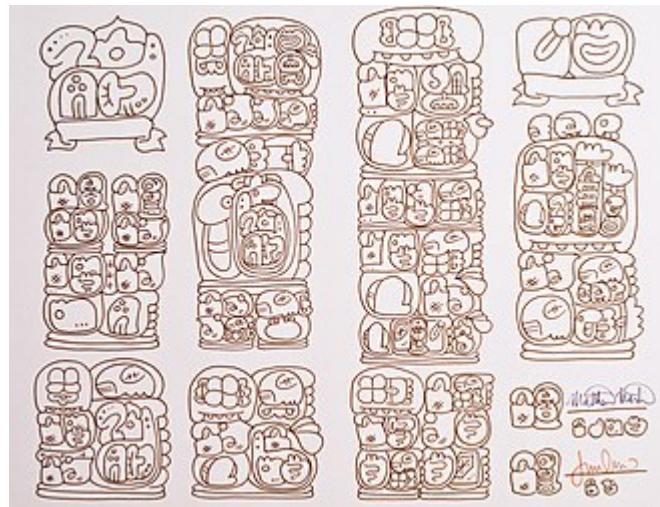
A contract in the *sitelen sitelen* writing system (2012)[64]

tenpo li lili

An original poem about time by *jan Jasun*, which won first place in a 2023 poetry contest.[65]

> ona li wawa li lawa li tawa
> ali la ona li ken awen ala
> ona li mute li suli li lon
> li kama e moli
> li weka e kon
> tenpo
> li lili
> e musi e mi
> e ken pali ali pi jan pali ni
> tenpo li moku e tenpo mi sona
> mi wile e tenpo tan wile mi pona

jan Sitata (excerpt)

The opening lines of *jan Sitata* by *jan Kala*,[66] a 2022 Toki Pona translation of the novel Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse, follow below. Using interpuncts like this to mark the end of a sentence is less common than using periods, but not unusual.

> *jan Sitata li sama waso alasa li pona lukin li jan lili pi jan sona sewi · ona en jan sama Kowinta pi jan sona sewi ante li kama suli lon pimeja tomo, lon suno pi telo linja, lon poka pi tomo tawa telo, lon pimeja pi ma kasi Sawa, lon pimeja pi kasi kili · jan Sitata*

li lon telo la ona li pana sewi li telo e sijelo kepeken nasin sewi · suno li pimeja lili e selo walo ona · jan Sitata li lon ma kasi kili la kasi li pimeja e lukin ona · ona li musi li kute e kalama pi mama meli ona · ona li nasin sewi li kute e toki pi mama sona ona ·

Back-translation in English:

Siddhartha was like a bird of prey, handsome, and the child of a religious scholar. He and his fellow Govinda, who was from another religious scholar, grew up in the shade of the house, in the sun of the river, near the boats, in the shade of the Salwald forest, in the shade of the fruit tree. When Siddhartha was in the water, he gave sacred offerings and washed himself in the holy manner. The sun tanned his pale skin. When Siddhartha was in the fruit tree grove, the trees shaded his eyes. He played, and heard the song of his mother. He followed the sacred ways, and listened to the teachings of his learned father.

Hail Mary

jan Meli o[67] ([Ave Maria](), by Tobias Merkle on Johnathan Gabel's blog, 2020)

jan Meli o,
kon sewi li suli insa sina.
wan sewi li poka sina.
lon meli la, wan sewi li pona e sina.
kili pona pi insa sina li sewi Jesu.
jan Meli sewi o!
mama pi jan sewi o!
tenpo ni la, tenpo pi moli mi mute la,
o toki tawa wan sewi tan mi mute jan ike.
awen.

See also

 Constructed languages portal

- The dictionary definition of *Appendix:Toki Pona* at Wiktionary
- The dictionary definition of *Category:Toki Pona language* at Wiktionary

- [Alphabet of human thought](#)

- [Hyponymy and hypernymy](#)

- [Philosophical language](#)

- [Army Slavic](#)

Notes

a. When writing in Toki Pona, capital letters are used only for proper names, such as the names of people.[2][3]

b. *toki* as a noun has meanings including 'language', 'talk', and 'communication'.[4] *pona* as an adjective has meanings including 'good', 'peaceful', and 'simple'.[4]

c. Prior to the publication of *Toki Pona: The Language of Good*, the language grew to 118 words.[9] Between then and the publication of *Toki Pona Dictionary*, varying counts were given for the number of words in the former (*nimi pu*, lit. 'words of the official Toki Pona book'), ranging between 120 and 125.[2][5][6] The *Toki Pona Dictionary* added 16 new "essential" words (*nimi ku suli*, lit. 'important dictionary words'),[10] and states on its back cover that there are a total of 137.[11] It also includes several less-used words (*nimi ku pi suli ala*, lit. 'dictionary words of little importance').[10]

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External links

- Official website (https://tokipona.org/) – The creator's website

- Toki Pona dictionary (https://jan-ne.github.io/tp/dictionary)

- *lipu Wikipesija* (https://wikipesija.org/wiki/lipu_open), a wiki-based encyclopedia written in Toki Pona

- *sona pona* (https://sona.pona.la), a wiki about Toki Pona
  - Where is Toki Pona used? (https://sona.pona.la/wiki/Where_is_Toki_Pona_used%3F) – A page with many links to Toki Pona related websites

- How can a language only have 120 words? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PY3Qe_b9ufl) – Rob Watts on his *RobWords* YouTube channel

- Lang's personal website (https://www.lang.sg)